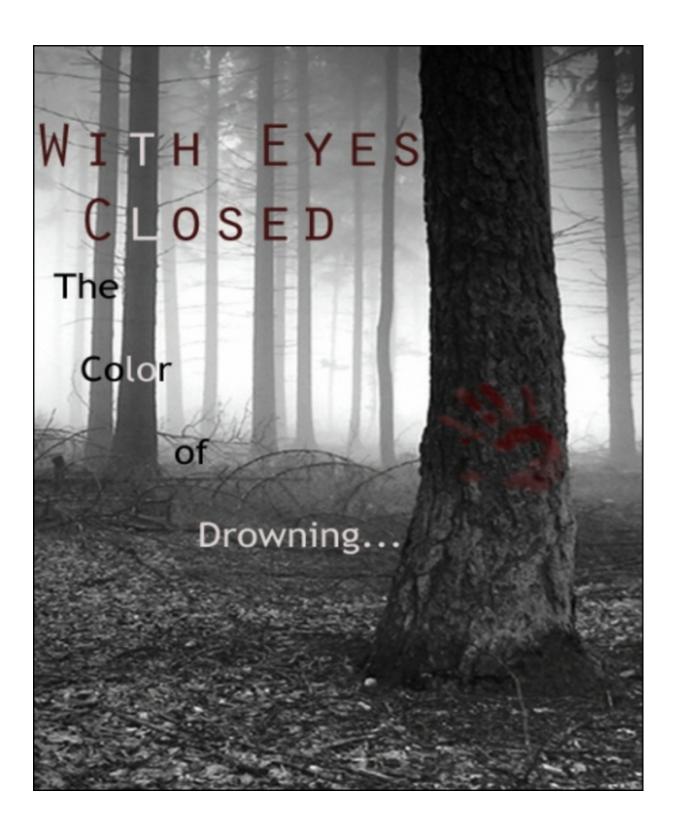
WITHEYES CLOSED The Color of Drowning...



### Jason Miranda

# With Eyes Closed

## **The Color Of Drowning**

With Eyes Closed...

**An Intimate Tale By:** Jason Miranda

Regret...

"I love you." You say in a tone that pierces the tongue before escaping your lips- twelve gauge. I've heard you say this so many times, but you mean it this time, just like last time.

'I don't much like needles.' I think to myself, so I ignore the words and close my eyes. You lay your head on my chest and all the lies burn a hole through my heart. So many promises, empty. But I suppose I can pretend, for now. It isn't hard. It just hurts sometimes. I push the thought back and pull you closer. I run my finger down your naked back; cool soft skin shivers as I touch your spine. So this is what it's come to-feigning intimacy? You are an impostor and this is not your skin. I caress your neck and imagine what you really look like beneath your mask. A monster, pale and dead just like you left her. I remember the night, as clear as day through the scope.

She was so beautiful.

Like rain.

It was raining the night that you killed her. Torrents of needles pierced my skin as I stared in tear streaked horror at the brutality of the scene. It was cold and dark, and the sky was bleeding red with crimson. I bit back the urge to scream and you held the knife so tight your knuckles tensed white with fury. I wanted to scream so badly. I wanted to yell out, "Why? Why are you doing this? How could you destroy something so beautiful, so pure? Something meant to last forever!" But I couldn't. I was curious and they were right. My God,

they were right. Just like the cat.

Regret

You didn't know that I was there, watching. You didn't know.

I didn't dare move... the ground was littered with broken twigs and autumn leaves so I knew any false step would have alarmed you. Would have stopped you. Oh, how I wanted you to stop; and yet no words would come. No pleas, no begging. I watched it happen and sat idly by.

I should have been the one, I know. I should have been there to say something, anything, that would make you stop hurting her, but I've said it all before. It changes nothing. This is what you wanted, what you've always wanted. I should have seen it in your eyes the day I met you and that horrible lie you told me- what you were capable of. It wasn't hard to miss that night, the night that you stole her life. Even in the darkness I could see the twisted smile on your face. A smile that meant that it was all over, and everything was different now. I knew then that you were right. Things would never be the same because you loved what you were doing and secretly I did, too. Regret.

This wasn't supposed to happen. No one was supposed to get hurt, remember? She never did anything to you. She was innocent, and lovely. You were the guilty one. The devil inside. Her color was a perfect shade of pink, full of passion and a purity you could never even touch, even then as you dug your spidery fingers into her wounds, desperate to feel what she had. I remember that I laughed then, slightly, because I knew that you couldn't come close to knowing, and you never will.

'I don't love you,' I whisper to my thoughts, 'I could never love you.' It was her that I loved. She was the one that I told and I meant it. She was the only one.

"What are you thinking about?" You ask me, and your scandalous eyes meet mine against the reflection of the tv screen. All I can see is the blade.

And the wounds.

So many. Every time you stabbed her you killed a small part of me as well. Did you know that? Did you even think about that at all? Did I cross your mind even once while you were hacking away our love?

I didn't think so.

"Nothing." I reply, knowing how far from true it always is. All I do now is think. Why? How? What if? Where would we be if I had stopped all this from happening, or at the very least, tried to? Would you have still found a way? Would I still feel so small? Would your skin still feel so frozen against mine? I don't know. I'll never know. Regret.

Your cold heart makes no sound as I kiss your breasts. This isn't real. It can't be real. You hover over me, biting and scratching my unwanting skin... it's quite unaffecting these days. I shiver in hidden revulsion as your body presses me tenderly and your hips tighten around my legs. If only you knew how disgusted I feel right now.

You don't want to know what I'm thinking and I could never tell you.

"You're lying. Tell me?" You smile, faking innocence. Pretending like I don't already know. You're not that convincing, no matter how hard you try to be just like her. You're not and I can see it, all too clearly. Your bright ocean blue eyes flicker with something like pure evil and I long to see her behind them, but it's just you again.

Perhaps, it's all a trick. Maybe you saw me there that night. Maybe you know I know, and now you're screwing with my mind. I just don't know. How could I ever know?

Regret.

I close my eyes again and I force myself to say, "I was thinking about you, hun. You're all I ever think about." Which is true, but not how I meant for you to hear it.

"That's good." You laugh. "Cause I think about you too, baby. All the time. I missed you."

I miss her. More than anything. And I hate you for what you've done. "I missed you too." We kiss and your lips burn mine, like poison. I lay my head back against the headrest and try to seem indifferent. Suddenly, a jolt of intense fear and pain and angst indescribable in words, runs through me. Why am I still here? Why do I put up with it all? I'm trapped and I can never forgive you for keeping me here. Maybe I should just go. Just leave, and see what happens to you. Maybe it would help if I saw you suffer as I've suffered. I would, but I have this aching feeling that you don't really need me here at all. That somehow it would bring you joy if I conceded and left, leaving

you victorious in your efforts of keeping me from having her. From loving her. From being loved. Who knows? I don't. Regret.

### Deeper...

"I love you so much." You say again and again, between each kiss. It feels like so long ago, and I swear since that night, every smile you've seen has been forced- false like the moon on the night you killed that poor girl. Painted crimson.

For some reason I can't help thinking this is all a dream.

I should have seen it coming. You came to me before with the culprit in your hands, and God, it was so appealing, even to me. So I gave in to you, and that look in your eyes. The pressure. Who knew they would be so right. Thank you, to all my peers.

I can't blame them. I promised it would never get this bad. Not so bad that it would hurt. Not so bad that it would change us. It was just for fun. Just to make things interesting.

Hell, I lied. We both lied. It was bad. I just kept pretending I couldn't see it..

But I saw it then, and the tears fell hard as the rain that night, washed away into a dark chasm in the ground. The same one you dug for her- six feet deep, a perfect little hole in the world.

Our world.

The forest was so dark and wet and I imagined it weeping for all the hurtful things you were doing in its midsts. "Look at all the reds!" You screamed, berating her with your knife. "Oh how I love autumn! The colors!" How can you be so cruel?

I guess, I can't say I didn't see it coming. I held my own, and you just became worse and worse, falling deeper and deeper into your precious little hole. You would have left me behind long ago if I hadn't held on so tight. I suppose I should be grateful.

At least we fell together.

But somewhere along the fall, I saw a future I never asked for, and I pulled away. I reached for something to help me back up, and I tried to take her with me. She couldn't hold on. Gravity had it's hold on

her, and nature took it's course. There I was that night, watching you fall, and watching her die.

Falling...

Bleeding...

Falling...

Dying...

Falling...

Crash... into a million tiny pieces of broken trust.

I reluctantly looked down into that hole and I saw her mangled body, torn to pieces by the thrust of your hand, by the stroke of your knife. She didn't stand a chance. You were so much stronger than she felt at the time. I wish I hadn't let this happen. I wish I hadn't watched you take over. I wish I would have done something.

When you were finally finished and walking away so pleased with yourself, I remember snapping out of my trance and desperately crawling into the hole. Carefully I held her head in my arms. She looked up at me, crying, blood pouring from her mouth as she choked on her last words. I could just make them out through the thunderous rain crashing mercilessly around us. "I love you... I don't want to die. Help me, please."

And then nothing. The ocean in her eyes disappeared suddenly behind a deep black void, and I tried so hard to bring her back, but it was too late. I had failed her. The blood on my hands was mine to bear, just as much as it was yours.

You know, I can still taste it-the bitterness that clouded the air. It was almost as though the rain that fell was acidic in nature, burning through my clothes and skin. Still, it couldn't wash away the blood.

My tongue doubles back in my throat as the senses comes back to mind and I choke on the words, "I love you too." I don't mean it. Those are just words to me now. Now that she's dead and I'm left with nothing, except you. You have become something else, something farther than the sun from where I lie. I am all alone.

I close my eyes and brush back the stale dry tears that keep trying to fall. I can't let them show. I have to be strong. I know this. My hands caress your sides and you pour into me, leaving me breathless in the wake of every mistake I ever made. Like when I give in to you each time, knowing it's wrong, knowing the betrayal. But I must. It's the

only thing that keeps me sane.

The one thing I have left that keeps me alive.

I can't cry, I refuse to give you the satisfaction, though I want to. Because I miss her "more than the sun misses the rain." Because I long to feel her again, to touch her face, and to know her like before. Before the addiction consumed her, and so consumed me. I try so hard to hold on to that memory... her gorgeous blue eyes, her creamy white skin, her long brown mess of hair that was always too curly and tangled for her, but just perfect for me. I remember she hardly ever left the house without straightening her hair because she was so insecure about it.

Ah, insecurity. Her fatal flaw. Your perfect weapon.

I still can't believe how easy it was for you to use that against her. You're sick. How long will I force myself to endure this putrid example of naivety run amok? I suppose as long as it takes to find her again. To bring her back to life. To see her again as I remember her and to share our lives as one. Until then, I will live this lie, because I'm so afraid to be alone and so scared to let this die. Like you let her die.

I pull you even closer and in contrast to your fierce nails tearing into my skin, I gently massage the dimples at the small of your back until you moan so loud my ears ache. It's that time again. Time to bring myself to the lowest level and feed into your lies, just to keep you happy. Just to make sure you never leave me.

As you bring me deeper into you, I recall again how deep that hole was, and how you never even tried to fill it again. Perhaps the dirt was too wet. Or, more likely your heart was too frozen. There was no funeral for her, no eulogy, no celebration of a life well lived, no gathering of friends and family to say goodbye. There was no gravestone with pleasant words etched into the face of it to keep her memory alive. There is no place for me to leave her flowers and speak to her in hopes that she'll hear what I'm saying.

No. My thoughts and words fall only on death's ears.

Her body still lay in that empty forest, beneath the trees, surely hidden by now beneath a grave pile of multicolored leaves. I cringe to think of the decay she's succumbed to by now. No more bright blue eyes, no more creamy smooth skin, and no more silky auburn

hair- just a crumpled mass of bones and decomposed tissue. Still, even in her state, she's more beautiful than you will ever be.

I hate you so much.

But, I loved her too much, so I keep my mouth shut, close my eyes and bite the bullet. Take one for the team. I try to imagine it's her I'm making love to and not some monster whose touch makes my skin crawl. But how long can I do this? How long?

#### Truth...

You force my hair back with your long fingers and kiss my neck, my chin, my cheek, my lips. Your breath smells like ginger and burnt vinegar. We both know why, don't we? Oh the bittersweet smell of morphine and a slight dash of fentanyl. Lovely isn't it? It's hard to get that taste out of my mouth, especially with your tongue jammed down my throat.

It's become like routine now.

Wake up, take the dose, inhale death. Enjoy.

Sex. Sleep. No time for food. We're not that hungry anyways.

Take the dose. Sex. Sleep. Run to the bathroom to throw up our stomach pains, and maybe take a shit while were there.

Take the dose. Sex. Sleep... We haven't left the house in days it seems.

Another dose. Sex. Sleep. Shake. Shiver. It's too cold in this room, Damnit!

When will it end? When will it end? This hurtful cycle that's tightly gripping at the seams of my already torn soul.

It gets me through it all though, so I can't hate it entirely. Am I a victim, or a hypocrite? Either way, it's the only thing that works these days. It keeps the reality of the whole thing in check, you know? Yeah, you know. Probably better than I do. It's like candy to you. For me it's like... well, it's kind of like I'm one of those psychotic patients pacing lazily through the mental ward, and your that heartless nurse with the devilish grin and greasy yellow hair, making her rounds with tiny plastic cups of routine medication to keep us... peaceful. But

we're not really. Not on the inside. Physically I'm numb, sure, but here in my mind is a deep cesspool of sadistic thoughts and horrific pain bordering on twisted pleasure. There is no such thing as relief. I have no release.

My body won't move and my mouth won't open, but my mind is constantly screaming out, 'I want to go back! Back to the way things were! Can we? Please?' I beg to myself. I can't ask you these things because I already know what you would say.

"Just one more hit, baby. One more, and then I swear it's all over. Okay?" My eyes open scrupulously. The sex was over and I hadn't noticed. Am I really that high? You're back on the floor again, brewing up another round. I look up and realize I'm shaking again, uncontrollably, and I can't stop crying. I want this to be over and you know that I do. You just won't let it end. God, I'm so weak.

"Come over here. I need your help to light it." It's so much easier to cook up with a helper- one to smoke, and one to hold the lighter. You know this because your clever little self looked it up online. Just google, 'Best ways to cook heroin and smoke it.' Even you were surprised how many hits there were and just how useful the information was. Me, I just couldn't believe it was so casually broadcasted over the web, and no one seemed to care. Maybe they should have. Maybe we wouldn't be here right now if someone had slammed their fists on the table, opened their mouths and said, "Goddamnit, man! Think of the children! We can't allow this." NO, that's not true. I know as well as anyone that the prohibition of anything only begets more desire for it. It was going to happen regardless.

I remember you wanted to shoot it up at first. Straight through the veins and to the brain. The ultimate high. You were so excited and then so bummed when I told you I couldn't. I hated needles too much. So you were kind and compromised.

It's a long process to smoke the drug, but it's worth it to you. We methodically go through the steps again, and suddenly I realize that you're right. The high is leaving, and I'm falling back into a place I don't want to be again.

We quickly start by flattening our five by five piece of materialaluminum foil, not glass like so many foolishly use, because it takes too long to change temperature. Foil is perfect because it heats and cools almost instantaneously. Gotta love the world wide web.

You carefully place a tiny piece of the ruthless beast in the center and I try to keep my hand from shaking long enough to grip the lighter tight, and the foil loose but secure. We don't want to drop it again. Last time we spent an hour eying every last thread of carpet for another tiny morsel of solace.

"Okay. Light it." You say, and the countdown starts.

Five...Four...Three...Two...One... Blast off. Houston, we are a go.

"Okay, Release." You inhale and the smoke rises in a beautiful gray stream that shoots straight to your lips. We finally got the timing perfect. Less waste. Mom would be so proud.

Your head falls back, and I'm actually jealous. I get like this every time. My lips feel dry and my tongue practically hangs out of my mouth when I watch you feel what I can't wait to feel again. How did it come to this? How did I let this happen? Oh... I remember.

Above me, I can hear a soft patter on the roof. It must be raining. I wouldn't know, all the windows are closed and the doors are locked tight. I'm cut off from the outside and it's been this way for so long. I miss the rain... I want to feel it on my face again.

Oh God, I remember the night you killed her. It was raining then too. The night you killed us both. With your precious drug, like a knife cutting away all life. This is your creation. Your masterpiece. The knife was your paintbrush and somehow you've changed the color on the canvas. It was once a glowing red, passionate, loving... now it's an undaunted black- and black is YOUR color.

Black hair.

Black lipstick.

Black skirt.

Black Heart.

You've slowly stolen all the hues from my world. I'm stuck here in this dark room, lit by a single waning candle because you claim the light hurts your eyes- further proof that you're a monster. Somehow you've forced yourself like a wedge into my soul. I'll never get her back. For the life of me I can never change what we've become. You've won.

A single eager tear finally falls past my cheek and lands on your

hand, freezing on impact. I take the hit, and close my eyes, slipping precariously back into your world. For a tiny moment I'm free, but there's no escaping the inevitable. This is all real. This is no dream. You killed her, and I let you, and this is my punishment.

Behind my lids my eyes convulse and all around us things that I can't see are moving. I slip in and out of consciousness and each time feeling closer and closer to the terrible truth.

She's dead. She's gone.

You are my world now. My everything. You are all that I am now, and ever will be. I see you through every closed window, in the corners of every darkened room I walk through, in this house that's not my own. The shadows consume me in every pore and now, even with eyes closed, all I see is you. Your color. Black...

Publication Date: October 19th 2010

https://www.bookrix.com/-constantine.eternal